Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheet attached in connection with the above-identified application containing Figure 7 is being presented as a new formal drawing sheet.

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

New claims 9 and 10 have been added. After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-10 are now pending in this application.

Objections

The drawings are objected to for not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the drawings are objected to for not showing a toothed washer. New Figure 7 has been added to show a toothed washer. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,362,187 (hereafter "Scalise") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,450,529 (hereafter "Kalandek et al."). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites an airbag, including a fabric sheet and a structure for attaching the fabric sheet to a vehicle body that includes a spacer, wherein the threaded fastener is inserted into the cylindrical portion, wherein an end of the spacer is in contact with the vehicle body and another end of the spacer is provided with a flange having a diameter larger than the inner diameter of the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the spacer is configured to rotate within the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces.

Scalise discloses a releasable locking fastener that includes a bolt 12 and a nut 14. See Scalise at col. 2, lines 60-65. The bolt 12 includes a bolt shank 24 that is inserted into cavity 34 within the nut 14 to lock the nut 14 and bolt 12 together. See Scalise at col. 3, lines 27-36. Because Scalise discloses that the shank 24 is part of the bolt 12, Scalise does not disclose or suggest an airbag with a structure for attaching the fabric sheet to a vehicle body that includes a spacer, "wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces."

Kalandek et al. discloses a side airbag 22 that includes tabs 39 with openings 40 for connecting the airbag to a roof rail 38 of a vehicle. See Kalandek et al. at col. 3, lines 2-9. Kalandek et al. does not disclose or suggest a spacer as recited in claim 1.

It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the releasable locking fastener of Scalise by the teachings of Kalandek et al. to make the airbag and structure of claim 1. The device made by the combination of Scalise and Kalandek et al. would not have all of the features of claim 1 because such a combination would not provide a spacer "wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces." Nor would one of ordinary skill in the art have had motivation to make such a modification.

For at least the reasons noted above, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 6 and 7 depend upon claim 1 and are allowable over the combination of Scalise and Kalandek et al. for at least the reasons noted above. Claim 6 further recites "a toothed washer configured to prevent the spacer from being removed from the hole of the fabric sheet, the toothed washer having a diameter larger than the inner diameter of the hole." Claim 7 depends upon claim 6. The Office states that although Scalise does not disclose a toothed washer, it would have been obvious to substitute the washer (see items 46 or 54 in Figures 4 and 5 of Scalise) of Scalise with a toothed washer because these washers are art-recognized equivalents. See Office Action at pages 3 and 4. However, the Office has not provided any support in the prior art for this assertion that these washers are art-recognized equivalents or that they perform the same function. The Office appears to take Official Notice in regard to the features of claims 6 and 7. These features are not commonly know or disclosed in the prior art relied upon by the PTO. Applicant respectfully requests that the Office provide prior art to show these features or withdraw the rejection. See M.P.E.P. § 2144.03. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scalise in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,279,941 (hereafter "Nakajima et al."). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 4 recites an airbag including a fabric sheet and a structure for attaching the fabric sheet to a vehicle, including a spacer positioned in the hole of the sheet, wherein the spacer includes a spacer rear body and a spacer front body to be connected with the spacer rear body, wherein at least one of the spacer rear body and the spacer front body include a cylindrical portion inserted in the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the diameter of the cylindrical portion is smaller than the inner diameter of the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the spacer front body includes a flange having a diameter larger than the inner diameter of the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the spacer rear body includes an enlarged portion larger than the hole of the fabric sheet, wherein the enlarged portion is located between the vehicle body and the fabric sheet, wherein the threaded fastener is inserted into the cylindrical portion, wherein the spacer includes a tacking member for tacking the spacer to the vehicle body so that the tacking member engages with an engaging hole in the vehicle body, and the spacer is configured to rotate within the hole of the sheet prior to tacking the spacer to the vehicle body with the tacking member, wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces.

As noted above, Scalise does not disclose or suggest an airbag with a structure for attaching the fabric sheet to a vehicle body that includes a spacer, "wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces." Nakajima et al. does not disclose or suggest an airbag with a structure that includes a spacer, "wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces."

It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the releasable locking fastener of Scalise by the teachings of Nakajima et al. to make the airbag and structure of claim 4. The device made by the combination of Scalise and Nakajima et al. would not have all of the features of claim 4 because such a combination would not provide a spacer "wherein the spacer is configured to be separate from the threaded fastener so that the spacer and threaded fastener form separate pieces." Nor would one of ordinary skill in the art have had motivation to make such a modification. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 5/26/2006

By _____

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